What is claimed is:

1.   A method for the automatic creation of a visual summary of video content of a video source, comprising the steps of:

(a)   automatic extraction of a plurality of keyframes representing scenes from a video source according to predetermined criteria to produce an initial visual summary;

(b)   assigning weights to a particular group of keyframes extracted in step (a) representing a particular scene of the video source in the initial visual summary;

(c)   refining the initial visual summary into a modified visual summary by filtering the keyframes having a lower weight assigned in step (b) relative to higher-weighted keyframes from the particular group of keyframes from the particular scene of the video source; and

(d)   adjusting a keyframe display rate of the modified visual summary to correspond with a fast forward/rewind speed of the video source so that the keyframes can be displayed during fast forward/rewind of the video source.

2.   The method according to Claim 1, wherein assignment of weights in step (b) includes assigning the weights based on a relative time each of the keyframes in the particular group represents of the particular scene from the video source.

3. The method according to Claim 2, wherein the keyframes in the particular group that represent less than a predetermined threshold of time in the particular scene of the video source are 5 filtered.

4. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the keyframe display rate is adjusted to correspond with a user-selected fast forward/rewind speed of the video source.

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5. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the adjusting of the keyframe display rate in step (d) includes providing audio for the modified visual summary during fast forward/rewind.

15 6. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the adjusting of the keyframe display includes replacing individual keyframes by short sets of frames that capture movement in the particular scene.

20 7. The method according to Claim 1, wherein the weighting of the keyframes is based on user-specified interests.

8.   The method according to Claim 7, wherein the user-specified interests include images of specific actors in the video source.

9.   The method according to Claim 7, wherein the user-specified interests include movement of actors in the video source.

10.   A method for creation of a visual summary of video content of a video source comprising the steps of:

(a) designating a plurality of frames from a video source as keyframes;

(b) adjusting a display rate of the keyframes designated in step (a) according to a fast forward/rewind speed of the video source so that the keyframes are displayed for a predetermined time during fast forward/rewind of the video source.

11.   The method according to Claim 10, further including (c) providing an audio portion for the keyframes designated in step (a).

12.   The method according to Claim 11, where the audio portion is a substitute audio portion customized to correspond to the designated keyframes.

13.   The method according to Claim 11, wherein step (c) includes providing a plurality of audio portions, wherein a particular audio portion is selected to match the display rate of the keyframes in step (b).

14.   The method according to Claim 10, where a portion of the designated keyframes in step (a) comprise an advertisement.

15.   The method according to Claim 14, wherein the substitute audio portion comprises one of: (1) a description of the product advertised in the portion of the designated keyframes comprising the advertisement, and (2) a pronunciation of the name of the product advertised in the portion of the designated keyframes comprising an advertisement.

16.   The method according to Claim 10, wherein step (a) includes providing at least one user-created alternative keyframe to the visual summary that did not originate from the video source.

17.   The method according to Claim 16, wherein said at least one user-created alternative keyframe comprises an advertisement.

18.   A system for the automatic creation of a visual summary of video content of a video source, comprising:

means for extraction of a plurality of keyframes representing scenes from a video source according to predetermined criteria to produce an initial visual summary;

means for assigning weights to a particular group of keyframes extracted by the means for extraction representing a particular scene of the video source in the initial visual summary;

means for refining the initial visual summary into a modified visual summary by filtering the keyframes having a lower weight relative to higher-weighted keyframes from the particular group of keyframes from the particular scene of the video source; and

means for adjusting a keyframe display rate of the modified visual summary to correspond with a fast forward/rewind speed of the video source so that the keyframes are displayed during fast forward/rewind.

19.   The system according to Claim 18, wherein the means for extraction comprises manual designation of keyframes representative of the video source.

20.   The system according to Claim 18, wherein the means for extraction comprises automatic extraction means.

21.   The system according to Claim 18, wherein the means for assigning assigns the weights to the particular group of keyframes according to a relative time span represented by each respective keyframe.

22.   The system according to Claim 21, wherein the means for adjusting the keyframe display rate adjusts the display rate according to a user-selected fast forward/rewind speed of the video source.